

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:TDEAL/FDR

APPROVED BY EUR/EE:NGANDREWS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR,PINS,EFIN,CZ,US

SUBJECT: VISIT BY CZECHOSLOVAK DCM

REF: A. STATE 48382 B. PRAGUE 959

GENEVA FOR AMBASSADOR SHERER

1. AT HIS REQUEST CZECHOSLOVAK DCM BUZEK CALLED ON EUR/EE DIRECTOR ANDREWS ON APRIL 29 TO DISCUSS:(1) WHEREABOUTS OF CZECHOSLOVAK TRAVEL OFFICE EMPLOYEE, HANA STEKLOVA (REFTEL A); (2) UPCOMING DEPARTURE OF AMBASSADOR SPACIL; AND (3) PRESENT STATUS OF CLAIMS QUESTION.

2. CONCERNING HANA STEKLOVA, BUZEK REFERRED TO CZECHOSLOVAK EMBASSY'S NOTE OF MARCH 3 AND ASKED WHETHER WE HAD ANY INFORMATION AS TO HER WHEREABOUTS. WE TOLD HIM THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH INS AND NEW YORK POLICE ABOUT THIS MATTER, BUT AS YET THEY HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP ANY LEADS. WE PROMISED TO FOLLOW-UP WITH INS AND POLICE AND TO REPLY FORMALLY TO THE EMBASSY.

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3. ON THE DEPARTURE OF AMBASSADOR SPACIL, BUZEK SAID THAT ACTUAL DATE WAS NOT FIRM, BUT WOULD PROBABLY FALL SOME- TIME BETWEEN MAY 15-22.

4. BUZEK THEN ASKED IF WE HAD ANYTHING NEW TO REPORT ON CLAIMS QUESTION. ANDREWS SAID THAT WE HAVE BEEN TALKING TO SEVERAL LAWYERS REPRESENTING U.S. CLAIMANTS. THE LAWYERS HAVE BEEN HOLDING EXPLORATORY DISCUSSIONS AMONG THEMSELVES AND THE CLAIMANTS ON THE SHAPE OF ANY FUTURE SETTLEMENT. APPARENTLY, MOST CLAIMANTS NOW SEEM WILLING TO ACCEPT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, I.E., LESS THAN 100. ANDREWS SAID THAT THERE ALSO APPEARED TO BE A WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF SOME IN THE CONGRESS TO BACK OFF FROM THEIR DEMAND FOR 100 CENTS ON THE DOLLAR. HOWEVER, NO CONSENSUS HAS YET DEVELOPED ON THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF AN ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT. ANDREWS INDICATED THAT THERE WOULD PROBABLY BE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS IN AN ATTEMPT TO ARRIVE AT A POSITION TO WHICH ALL INTERESTED PARTIES COULD AGREE. HE ADDED THAT WE COULD SEE NO PURPOSE IN TAKING UP THIS MATTER WITH THE GOC UNTIL WE HAD ARRIVED AT A COMMON POSITION. IN THE PROCESS, WE WILL ALSO WANT TO MAKE KNOWN TO THE CLAIMANTS OUR OWN VIEWS ABOUT WHAT IS POSSIBLE OR NEGOTIABLE. SUMMING UP, ANDREWS SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME MOVEMENT, BUT NOT ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY A FORMAL APPROACH TO THE GOC.

5. BUZEK ASKED WHETHER WE COULD GIVE HIM SOME IDEA ON THE TIMING OF THESE DISCUSSIONS. ANDREWS REPLIED THAT THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE SINCE SOME CLAIMANTS WERE PRESSING FOR A SPEEDIER, IF SMALLER, SETTLEMENT, WHILE OTHERS WERE CONTENT TO HOLD OUT LONGER IN HOPES OF OBTAINING MORE FROM THE CZECHOSLOVAKS.

6. ANDREWS THEN RAISED MATTER OF CZECHOSLOVAK PRESS COVERAGE OF U.S. ROLE IN LIBERATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA. HE NOTED THAT MFA HAD BEEN WORKING CLOSELY WITH OUR EMBASSY IN PUTTING TOGETHER A PROGRAM TO COMMEMORATE VE DAY. WE APPRECIATE THE MINISTRY'S HELPFUL AND COOPERATIVE APPROACH. IN THIS REGARD, WE HAD DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE BEHIND SEVERAL RECENT ARTICLES IN CZECHOSLOVAK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PRESS WHICH WERE HIGHLY CRITICAL OF U.S. DURING LIBERATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, INCLUDING AMERICAN BOMBING IN SPRING OF 1945. WE WERE AWARE THAT OUR CHARGE IN PRAGUE HAD RAISED THIS MATTER WITH ZANTOVSKY IN A DISCUSSION ON APRIL 24, BUT WISHED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT WE FULLY AGREED WITH AND SUPPORTED THE CHARGE'S REPRESENTATIONS. ANDREWS CONCLUDED THAT IF WE ARE GOING TO JOINTLY CELEBRATE THE OCCASION,

THEN WE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT WE FOUGHT TOGETHER AS ALLIES AND ACT ACCORDINGLY.

7. BUZEK RETORTED THAT IT WAS A FACT THAT THE BOMBING IN CZECHOSLOVAK IN MARCH AND APRIL 1945 WAS TOTALLY

UNNECESSARY; THE NAZIS WERE ALREADY DEFEATED. ANDREWS
REPLIED THAT NO ONE COULD HAVE FORECAST AT THAT TIME JUST
HOW LONG THE NAZIS WOULD HOLD OUT. BUZEK SPECULATED THAT
THE ARTICLES IN QUESTION MAY BE RELATED SOMEHOW TO
CZECHOSLOVAK UNHAPPINESS OVER THE OUTCOME OF THE TRADE
BILL. KISSINGER

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